

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BEIRUT 00401 311556Z

ACTION EB-08

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 CCO-00 CIAE-00 OTPE-00 FCC-02

INR-07 NSAE-00 OC-06 USIA-15 COME-00 BIB-01 AID-05

IGA-02 /057 W

-----311612Z 124324 /50

P 311521Z JAN 77

FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2884

UNCLAS BEIRUT 0401

STATE PASS AID AND COMMERCE

AID FOR RICHARDSON

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ETEL, EAID, LE, US

SUBJECT: REBUILDING LEBANON'S TELEPHONE SYSTEM

1. ON JAN 28, GOL MINISTER OF FINANCE AND PTT, FARID RAPHAEL, TELEPHONED CHARGE AND ASKED IF HE WOULD RECEIVE ON AN URGENT BASIS LEBANESE BUSINESSMAN GEORGE FREM WHO WOULD PRESENT REQUEST FOR USG ASSISTANCE. DURING SUBSEQUENT CALL, FREM ASKED IF USG COULD PROVIDE AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE EXPERTS TO STUDY REORGANIZATION AND RE-EQUIPMENT OF LEBANESE TELEPHONE SYSTEM. FREM SAID GOL IS INTERESTED IN SETTING UP A SEMI-PUBLIC CORP, A JOINT VENTURE BETWEEN THE GOL AND A PRIVATE COMPANY TO MANAGE TELEPHONES IN LEBANON. INITIALLY, GOL WOULD LIKE TO HAVE FULL INFORMATION ON LEGAL FRAMEWORK WHICH GOVERNS THE OPERATION OF PUBLIC TELEPHONE SYSTEM BY PRIVATE ENTERPRISE IN U.S. AND ON HOW THIS EVOLVED. THEY ARE HOPING FOR A TEAM OF THREE EXPERTS WHO COULD (1) EVALUATE LEBANON'S CURRENT TELEPHONE REQUIREMENTS; (2) DO COST ANALYSIS, AND (3) ASSESS FUTURE NEEDS AND DO
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PAGE 02 BEIRUT 00401 311556Z

INCOME PROJECTIONS. FREM, WHO HAS PREVIOUSLY WORKED WITH IESC, THOUGHT THIS ORGANIZATION MIGHT BE ABLE TO SUPPLY REQUIRED SKILLS.

2. COMMENT: LEBANESE ARE INTRIGUED BY STATUS OF PRIVATE TELEPHONE COMPANIES IN THE U.S. AND ARE INTERESTED IN LEARNING IF THE AMERICAN SYSTEM OR

SOME MODIFICATION OF IT WOULD WORK IN LEBANON. THIS
IDEA WAS MENTIONED BY MINISTER RAPHAEL TO AID TECH
TEAM LEADER RICHARDSON ON JAN 13. FREM SAID MANY
FOREIGN SALESMEN OF TELEPHONE EQUIPMENT ARE NOW
SEEKING TO "HELP" LEBANON, BUT GOL WOULD LIKE TO
HAVE THE SYSTEM LOOKED AT BY SOME AMERICAN EXPERTS
BEFORE DECIDING WHAT TO DO NEXT. WE WOULD THEREFORE
APPRECIATE SOME INDICATION ASAP OF WHETHER USG WILL
BE ABLE TO ASSIST LEBANESE IN THIS FIELD.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
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Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
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Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
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